

Downham Rural District.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

YEAR 1949

To which is appended the Report
of the Senior Sanitary Inspector.

DR. C. T. DARWENT, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

Downham Rural District Council

Members of the Public Health Committee

Chairman : Mr. H. G. Teverson.

Mr. W. Addison	Mr. H. J. Martin
Mr. S. Bailey	Rev. A. S. D. Page
Mr. E. Barker	Rev. J. C. Pallister
Mr. W. H. Bentley	Col. E. R. Pratt
Mr. A. P. Deck	Mr. F. Starling
Mr. A. Dye	Mr. M. Stocks
Mr. H. Gates	Mr. C. W. Thornhill
Mr. F. Green	Mr. S. F. L. Warner
Mr. H. Leonard	Mr. G. G. Wright
Mr. C. W. Lockey	

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council are ex-officio members of the Committee.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

Dr. C. T. Darwent, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

Also holds the appointments of :—

Asst. County Medical Officer of Health.

Asst. County School Medical Officer.

Medical Officer of Health to Marshland Rural District.

Medical Officer of Health to Downham Urban District.

SANITARY INSPECTOR.

H. W. Nowell, Assoc. M.C.T., M.S.I.A.

ADDITIONAL SANITARY INSPECTOR.

D. N. Rowsell, M.S.I.A.

CLERK TO THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

J. Osler.

STOKE FERRY,

June, 1950.

To The Chairman and Members of the Downham Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1949.

A report by your Senior Sanitary Inspector is also included herein.

The vital statistics for the year 1949 may be regarded as satisfactory.

The total population is given by the Registrar-General as 22,380, but that figure includes 1,320 non-civilians, who are not included in calculating the death rate, etc.

The comparability figure as given by the Registrar-General is 0.91 for the year 1949.

The number of notifiable infectious diseases for the year shows a marked increase owing to a widespread occurrence of Measles.

Section B dealing with the general provisions of the health services has been given in fuller detail, which I trust will be helpful and informative.

I wish to express my appreciation of the support given by the Public Health Committee in carrying out my duties. Also to thank the Clerk and Staff of my department for their support and co-operation.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

C. T. DARWENT,

Medical Officer of Health.

SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS, 1949.

Area (in acres) ....	....	....	....	....	....	124,152
Population, 1931 Census	....	....	....	....	....	15,503
Population, 1949	....	....	....	....	(Civilian)	21,060
					(Total)	22,380
Number of separate dwellings occupied, 1949	....	....				6,936
Rateable Value, 1949 ....	....	....	....	....	....	£64,604
Product of a Penny Rate, 1949	....	....	....	....	....	£296 9s. 8d.

LIVE BIRTHS.

LIVE BIRTHS.	Total	Male	Female	Downham Rural D.	Rate. England & Wales.	Administrative County
Legitimate	382	193	189			
Illegitimate	27	16	11			
	409	209	200	17.3	16.7	16.04

STILL BIRTHS (Rate per 1,000 (Live and Still Births)).

	Total	Male	Female	Rate. Downham Rural D.	England & Wales.	Administrative County
Legitimate	8	5	3			
Illegitimate	1	1	—			
	9	6	3	22·01	—	21·54

DEATHS (all causes).

DEATHS (all causes).				Rate.		
Total	Male	Female	Downham Rural D.	England & Wales.	Administrative County	
266	139	127	11·01	11·7	12·19	

DEATHS from Puerperal Causes.

Puerperal and post-Abortive Sepsis	....	....	....	Nil.
Other Puerperal causes	....	....	....	Nil.

INFANT MORTALITY (Rate per 1,000 Live Births).

	Total	Male	Female	Rate.	
				Downham	Administrative
				Rural D.	County.
Legitimate	6	5	—		
Illegitimate	1	1	1		
	7	6	1	17·01	29·17

DEATHS FROM

Cancer (all ages)	....	....	....	....	....	....	41
Measles (all ages)		....	....	....	....	....	Nil.
Whooping Cough (all ages)		....	....	....	....	....	1
Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)			....	..	....	....	1

SECTION A.

Natural and Social Conditions.

Area (acres)	....	....	....	....	....	....	124,152
Population	....	....	....	....	..	Civilian	21,060
						Total	22,380

DEATHS. The total number assigned to the District by the Registrar-General after adjustment for inward and outward transfers, was 266, an increase of 49 over the previous year. The death rate equals 11·01 per 1,000 of the resident population.

BIRTHS. The number (409) shows a slight increase over the year 1948. The birth rate of 17·3 is also higher.

MATERNAL MORTALITY. The maternal mortality figure is again Nil — which is most satisfactory.

INFANT MORTALITY. Seven infants under one year of age died during 1949. The infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births, equals 17·01.

SECTION B.

1. GENERAL MEDICAL SERVICES.

Norfolk Executive Council, 54, Prince of Wales' Road,
Norwich. *Clerk* — R. J. Cobb, Esq.

2. EAST ANGLIAN REGIONAL HOSPITAL BOARD.

Senior Administrative Medical Officer:—

Dr. J. B. Ewen, M.D., D.P.H.,
Croft-Holme, 117, Chesterton Road,
Cambridge.

Since the 5th July, 1948, Hospitals have become the responsibility of the Regional Hospital Board, each Hospital being under the control of a Hospital Management Committee.

(a) GENERAL.

- (i) Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, Norwich.
- (ii) West Norfolk & King's Lynn Hospital, King's Lynn.
- (iii) Jenny Lind Hospital, Norwich.
- (iv) St. James' Hospital, King's Lynn (for chronic sick).
- (v) The Howdale Home, Downham Market.

(b) MATERNITY.

- (i) West Norfolk & King's Lynn Hospital (Maternity Unit).
- (ii) Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge.

(c) INFECTIOUS.

- (i) County Isolation Hospital, East Dereham.
- (ii) Isolation Hospital, King's Lynn.

(d) SANATORIA.

- (i) Kelling Sanatorium, Holt.
- (ii) Bramblewood Sanatorium, Holt.

(e) MENTAL.

- (i) St. Andrew's Hospital, Norwich.
- (ii) Hellesdon Hospital, Norwich.
- (iii) Heckingham Hospital, Norwich.
- (iv) Little Plumstead, Norwich.

3. MATERNITY SERVICES.

(a) DISTRICT NURSES (showing Parishes and Villages served):

Nurse Gerrard, High Street, Feltwell, Thetford.	Feltwell
Nurse Hunns, Lower Green, Methwold, Thetford	Hockwold
Nurse Smith, Nurse's Cottage, Stow, King's Lynn	Methwold
Nurse Porter, Nurse's Home, Nordelph.	Wimbotsham
Nurse Nelson, 6, Council Houses, Station Road, Watlington, King's Lynn.	Stow
Nurse Walker, Rose Cottage, Stoke Ferry, K. Lynn.	Nordelph
Nurse Mosley, 18, Council Houses, Wiggenhall St. Germans, King's Lynn.	Watlington,
	Wormegay,
	Tottenham,
	South Runcton
	Stoke Ferry
	Whittington
	Wiggenhall St.
	Mary Virgin,
	Wiggenhall St.
	Germans, Wiggen-
	hall St. Mary
	Magdalen.
Nurse Horn, 27, Barton Bendish, King's Lynn.	Marham,
	Shouldham,
	Shouldham
	Thorpe, Strad-
	sett, Fincham,
	Barton Bendish.
Nurse Russell, High Street, Hilgay, Downham Market.	Denver, Ryston,
	Fordham,
	Hilgay.
Miss Robinson, Nurse's Bungalow, Southery, Downham Market.	
	Southery

(b) MATERNITY. Beds in Regional Hospital Board Establishments.

(i) Stow Hall Maternity Home, Stow Bardolph.

4. AMBULANCE AND HOSPITAL CAR SERVICE.

This is a County Council function and is controlled by the Joint Ambulance Committee. It is worked on an Agency basis by the British Red Cross and the Order of St. John and W.V.S.

The Downham Rural Area is jointly served by the Downham Market, King's Lynn and Thetford Ambulances. Infectious Disease cases are conveyed by East Dereham and King's Lynn Infectious Disease Ambulances.

5. RED CROSS MEDICAL LOAN DEPOTS.

(a) Wiggenhall St. Germans	Mrs. Riches
(b) Watlington	Mrs. Dr. Thomas
(c) Fincham	Fairswell Manor
(d) Downham Market	Mrs. I. Burbeck, Court Hse.

6. COUNTY MEDICAL SERVICES.

(a) INFANT WELFARE CENTRES.

- (i) Downham Market.
- (ii) Outwell.
- (iii) Methwold.

The Assistant County Medical Officer of Health attends at the above sessions.

(b) SCHOOL MINOR AILMENT CLINICS.

Downham C.P. (Mixed) School. (Every third Wednesday during term.)

(c) SCHOOL DENTAL CLINIC.

Downham C.P. Primary. (Every Thursday during term.)

(d) HOME HELP SERVICE.

The County Home Help Scheme is doing excellent work and Home Helps are at present available for the following Parishes and Villages: Feltwell, Hockwold, Northwold, Stoke Ferry, Wereham, West Dereham, Stow Bardolph, Watlington, Magdalen, St. Germans, Methwold, Denver, Ten Mile Bank, Southery and Hilgay.

7. VENEREAL DISEASE CLINIC.

West Norfolk and King's Lynn Hospital:—

Tuesdays & Fridays

Tuesdays & Wednesdays

Males.

Females & Children.

7 p.m.

at 3 p.m.

8. DISINFECTION AND DISINFESTATION.

- (i) Disinfection of premises is carried out by the Senior Sanitary Inspector's staff.
- (ii) Disinfestation of bedding, clothing, etc., which cannot be carried out by this department, are sent to the East Dereham Isolation Hospital.

9. LABORATORY SERVICES.

- (a) Public Health Laboratory,
Isolation Hospital,
Bowthorpe Road,
Norwich.

Under the direction of Dr. I. M. Dowsett.

- (b) Public Analyst:
W. Lincolne Sutton, Esq., F.R.I.C.,
Redwell Street,
Norwich.

SECTION C.

Prevalence Of and Control Over Infectious and other Diseases.

SCARLET FEVER.

Thirteen cases were notified during the year—six cases were removed to the Isolation Hospital, at East Dereham.

DIPHTHERIA.

No case was notified during the year.

PNEUMONIA.

Twelve cases of primary pneumonia were notified. There were seven deaths.

ERYSIPELAS.

Nine cases of erysipelas were notified. The ages ranging from 45 to 65 years and over.

MEASLES.

The number of cases notified shows a very marked increase over the previous year, 215 cases as against 92 in 1948. The age group most affected was five years of age, and the monthly incident rate was heaviest in June and July. There were no deaths attributed to this disease.

INFECTIVE JAUNDICE.

There were 36 cases notified, and these are of seasonal interest, as they occurred in the cold or cooler months of the year — September to January — and the age groups affected varied from three years to 45 years.

ACUTE POLIOMYELITIS.

One case — a male — was removed to Norwich Hospital. The man, I believe, made quite a satisfactory recovery, although for a time there was a degree of loss of power in a lower limb.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

This is carried out in the main by the local medical practitioners; a few cases are, however, immunised at the Infant Welfare Centre.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION STATISTICS, 1949.

The child population of the district is 5,027, of whom 3,604, representing 71.09% have been immunised. The following Table shows the numbers of children immunised in age groups:—

Under school age 1,114.					School age 2,490		
Under	1 yr.	1 yr.	2 yrs.	3 yrs.	4 yrs.	5 to 9 yrs.	10 to 14 yrs.
	12	134	328	331	309	1,194	1,296

TUBERCULOSIS.

Twelve cases of Pulmonary and five of non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified during 1949. There were eleven deaths — nine from Pulmonary disease, and two from other forms of Tuberculosis.

The following Table indicates the incident of Tuberculosis in the District:—

	Tuberculosis (all forms)			Rate per 1,000 population R.D.	County rate per 1,000 of population
	Male	Female	Total		
1949	12	5	17	0.87	0.68

SECTION D.
STATISTICAL TABLES, 1949.
CAUSES OF DEATH.

Table No. 1.

Causes of Death.					<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
1.	Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers	....	....	....	—	—	—
2.	Cerebro spinal fever	....	....	....	—	—	—
3.	Scarlet fever	....	....	....	—	—	—
4.	Whooping cough	....	....	....	1	1	—
5.	Diphtheria	....	....	....	—	—	—
6.	Tuberculosis of respiratory system	....	....	....	9	4	5
7.	Other forms of Tuberculosis	....	....	....	2	2	—
8.	Syphilitic disease	....	....	....	1	1	—
9.	Influenza	....	....	....	—	—	—
10.	Measles	....	....	....	—	—	—
11.	Acute polio-myelitis and polio encephalitis	....	....	....	—	—	—
12.	Acute infective encephalitis	....	....	....	—	—	—
13.	Cancer of the buccal cavity & oesphagus (m)				3	2	1
	uterus (f)				—	—	—
14.	Cancer of stomach and duodennm	....	....	....	11	5	6
15.	Cancer of breast	....	....	....	4	—	3
16.	Cancer of all other sites	....	....	....	23	11	15
17.	Diabetes	....	....	....	4	1	2
18.	Intra-cranial vascular lesions	....	....	....	30	15	41
19.	Heart disease	....	....	....	92	52	40
20.	Other diseases of circulatory system	....	....	....	12	7	5
21.	Bronchitis	....	....	....	9	4	5
22.	Pneumonia	....	....	....	7	3	4
23.	Other respiratory diseases	....	....	....	4	2	2
24.	Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	....	....	....	2	2	—
25.	Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	....	....	....	1	1	—
26.	Appendicitis	....	....	....	2	1	1
27.	Other digestive diseases	....	....	....	3	1	2
28.	Nephritis	....	....	....	5	4	1
29.	Puerperal and post-abortive sepsis	....	....	....	—	—	—
30.	Other maternal causes	....	....	....	—	—	—
31.	Premature birth	....	....	....	—	—	—
32.	Congenital malformations, birth injury and infantile diseases	....	....	....	7	4	3
33.	Suicide	....	....	....	2	1	1
34.	Road traffic accidents	....	....	....	4	3	1
35.	Other violent causes	....	....	....	3	3	—
36.	All other causes	....	....	....	25	9	16
All causes					266	139	127

SECTION H.

Table No. 2.

CAUSES OF DEATH OF CHILDREN UNDER ONE YEAR, 1949.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Age in Weeks					Total
	1	2	3	4	5—52	
I. Congenital Malformations						
II. Diseases of Early Infancy						
(a) Congenital Debility			1	1		2
(b) Premature Birth						
(c) Injury at Birth	1					1
(d) Atelectasis	2					2
(e) Others						
III. Diseases of Respiratory System					1	1
IV. Diseases of Nervous System						
V. Diseases of Digestive System				1		1
VI. Tuberculosis Disease						
VII. Infectious Disease						
VIII. Syphilis						
IX. Overlaying						
X. Violence						
XI. All other causes						
Total	3		1	2	1	7

Table No. 3.

NEW CASES OF and DEATHS FROM TUBERCULOSIS, 1949.

	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory Male	Respiratory Female	Non-Respiratory Male	Non-Respiratory Female	Respiratory Male	Respiratory Female	Non-Respiratory Male	Non-Respiratory Female
Age in years								
— 1								
— 5			1					
—15	1		1	2				
—25	3		1					
—35	1	1			1	2		
—45	1	1			2	2	2	
—55	3							
—65		1			1	1		
65+								
Totals	9	3	3	2	4	5	2	—

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES
NOTIFICATION IN AGE GROUPS

TABLE NO. 4

Disease.	Under 1 year											Total	Removed to Hospital	Deaths
	1—	2—	3—	4—	5—	10—	15—	20—	35—	45—	65 & over			
Scarlet Fever	—	1	1	2	6	1	1	1	—	—	—	13	6	—
Cerebro Spinal Fever	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—
Measles	5	19	12	27	26	99	19	2	4	—	2	215	—	—
Whooping Cough	3	1	3	3	1	12	3	—	—	2	—	28	1	1
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	5	3	9	—	—
Pneumonia	—	—	2	—	1	1	1	—	3	—	5	12	—	7
Infective Jaundice	—	—	1	1	8	8	6	5	4	3	—	36	—	—
Acute Polio Myelitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	1	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Totals	9	20	16	34	31	126	32	9	14	7	15	3	316	8

MONTHLY INCIDENT OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.
(Other than Tuberculosis).

Disease.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
Scarlet Fever	7	—	—	4	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	13
Cerebro Spinal Fever	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Measles	10	26	8	15	23	44	51	26	6	2	—	4	215
Whooping Cough	—	2	—	7	2	1	—	1	3	—	—	12	28
Erysipelas	3	1	—	1	—	—	1	1	1	1	—	—	9
Pneumonia	1	1	2	—	2	1	—	1	—	—	2	2	12
Infective Jaundice	4	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	3	9	8	10	36
Acute Polio Myelitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Totals	26	30	10	29	27	47	53	30	13	12	11	28	316

REPORT OF SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting for your consideration my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1949.

1. Record of Inspections.

Drainage and Sewerage	....	....	....	613
Housing	....	....	....	364
Refuse Collection and Disposal	....	....	....	266
Food and Food Premises	....	....	....	120
Water Supplies	....	....	....	40
Infectious Disease	....	....	....	43
Milk and Dairies	....	....	....	26
Factories	....	....	....	18
Rat Infestations	....	....	....	51
Vermin	....	....	....	10
Building Licences	....	....	....	23
Keeping of Animals	....	....	....	18
Movable Dwellings	....	....	....	11
Miscellaneous	....	....	....	146
				—
				1749
				—

2 Notices Served.

The number of written notices served during the year was 68.

Informal Notices	....	....	....	....	59
Statutory Notices	....	....	....	....	9
					—
					68
					—

In addition to these, verbal notice was sufficient in many cases to bring about required improvements, or to secure the abatement of nuisances.

3. Nuisances.

Complaints of nuisances mainly arising from unsatisfactory drainage and housing defects have been investigated and in most cases abatement has been brought about by informal action. It was, however, necessary to serve nine Statutory Notices, but no Court proceedings were necessary during the year.

4. Housing.

Action was taken during the year in respect of three cottages unfit for human habitation and not repairable at reasonable cost. In two of these cases, the Council accepted undertakings by the owners to make the premises fit for human habitation. Action in the other case was not complete.

Several cottages in respect of which demolition orders have been made still remain occupied, as also do several groups of cottages which were declared clearance areas in 1939. The acute shortage of houses

makes it difficult to operate the provisions of the Housing Act in these cases, at the present time.

A great deal of your Sanitary Inspector's time is taken up in endeavouring to get essential repairs carried out to properties, many of which are condemnable.

5. Food Inspection.

(a) One hundred and twenty visits were made to food premises during the year. As a result of informal action, improvements were brought about at several premises to bring them up to the standard required by the Food & Drugs Act, but a good deal of work is still required in this field.

(b) At the end of the year there were five premises in the district registered for the sale of ice cream, but no manufacture of ice cream is carried on.

Thirteen samples of ice cream were taken, and of these only four satisfied the bacteriological standard of purity. Representations on this unsatisfactory position were made to a neighbouring Authority, where the ice cream was produced.

(c) The following food was condemned as being unfit for human consumption during the year:—

Tins or bottles of various foods	221
Beef	493 lbs.
Pork	5 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.
Mutton	7 lbs.
Flour	140 lbs.
Cheese	166 lbs.
Cooking Fat	48 lbs.
Bacon	35 lbs.
Cake	10 lbs.
Lard	4 lbs.

6. Milk and Dairies.

During the year five new registrations of cowkeepers or producers of milk were made, bringing the total number of persons on the register to 290.

The year saw a transfer of functions; the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries taking over the registration of dairy farms and becoming responsible for the production of milk there. The local Authorities are now only directly concerned with dairies other than those at the place of production. At the new dairies brought into use during the year a high standard was insisted upon.

7. Movable Dwellings.

One licence to station and use a movable dwelling (a trailer-caravan) was granted during the year.

Action was taken in three other cases, two of which involved the use of unlicensed camping sites. In all three cases, clearance of the sites was secured by informal action.

8. **Public Cleansing.**

(a) REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

A once-monthly system of collection of house refuse from all parishes was in operation during the year, but with the delivery of an additional refuse collection vehicle at the end of the year, arrangements were made to start a fortnightly collection early in 1950.

The refuse tips in regular use were at Watlington, Shouldham, Wimbotsham, Hilgay, Crimplesham, Whittington and Feltwell. All these received regular attention, but with existing transport it is not possible to provide sufficient "cover" to carry out proper controlled tipping methods.

(b) NIGHT SOIL COLLECTION AND CESSPOOL EMPTYING.

The weekly emptying of pail-closets in the parishes of Hilgay, Denver, Fincham, Downham West and Feltwell was maintained during the year, and 251 cesspools were emptied.

9. **Sewerage.**

The Council continued to maintain the ex-R.A.F. sewage disposal plants at Bexwell, Methwold and Feltwell.

The Bexwell plant in addition to dealing with the sewage from the housing sites, is also used for the disposal of night soil and cesspool contents, collected by the cesspool emptier.

The Council's decision to provide proper sewage disposal plants on several of the housing sites should have beneficial results and remove the nuisance which undoubtedly exists from time to time due to overflowing cesspools.

10. **Water Supplies.**

Seven samples of water from private wells were submitted during the year for bacteriological examination and all were reported unsatisfactory.

Where possible, arrangements were made for an alternative supply to be used for drinking purposes.

A well serving several Council Houses at West Dereham was found to be infected with small insects. The water was chlorinated and the treatment appeared to be successful.

Two samples of water from the Council's Waterworks at Denton Lodge were satisfactorily reported upon by the Public Analyst.

11. **Disinfection and Disinfestation.**

Houses disinfected after cases of infectious disease numbered 21. The disinfectant used was *Formaldehyde*.

No cases of bed bug infestation were discovered during the year and no disinfestation work was found necessary.

12. **Destruction of Rats and Mice.**

The Council again contracted with the Norfolk Agricultural Executive Committee for the destruction of rats in the area. Heavier infestations were noted than for previous years.

The Council's refuse pits and sewage works were amongst the places treated.

13. **Dirty Premises.**

Seven cases of dirty conditions in dwelling houses were discovered during the year. These cases were kept under observation and a reasonable standard of cleanliness was obtained without having to take legal action.

14. **Factories.**

Eighteen inspections were made and as a result two contraventions of the Factories Act discovered. These were dealt with by informal action.

The existing register of factories is in need of revision and it is proposed to make routine inspections of all premises within the scope of the Factories Act, and to compile a new register.

15. **Conclusion.**

One of the main sources of trouble experienced during the year has been the problem of sewage disposal at Council housing sites, but it is hoped that by more care in the construction and siting of future schemes it will be possible to avoid many of the pitfalls already experienced.

It is felt that the provision of the additional refuse collection vehicle, with a corresponding improvement in the frequency of refuse collection will be greatly appreciated. Improvement of disposal arrangements and storage accommodation of refuse at dwelling houses are matters still requiring attention.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

H. W. NOWELL,

Senior Sanitary Inspector.

HEALTH
A 8 SEP 50
C.R. 31